

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 7-9, and 11 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 5-6, 10, and 12 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and claims 1, 4, 9, and 11 are amended. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-4 and 6-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated over U.S. Application No. 2001/0034569 to Yamamoto et al. (“Yamamoto”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

With respect to independent claim 1, it now states the following:

1. An electronic apparatus which operates by electric power supplied from a cell unit that produces electricity by chemical reaction, comprising:
 - a connecting portion to which the cell unit is directly connectable;
 - a switching unit which switches an operation mode between a first operation mode that makes an operation with a first power consumption amount, and a second operation mode that makes an operation with a second power consumption amount lower than the first power consumption amount;
 - a notification unit configured to send a message indicating that the operation mode is switched to the cell unit through the connecting portion; and
 - a control unit configured to switch the operation mode on the basis of a message sent back from the cell unit through the connecting portion in response to the message of the notification unit.

Thus, claim 1 now recites an electronic apparatus including a connection portion to which the cell unit is directly connectable, that the notification unit is configured to send a message through the connection portion, and that the control unit is configured to receive a message through the connecting portion from the cell unit. Thus, the electronic apparatus of claim 1 may achieve a smooth switching of the operation modes, including with an output change of the cell unit.

In claim 1, the connection portion, to which the cell unit is directly connectable, is configured to establish communication with the cell unit with respect to the switching of the operation modes of the electronic apparatus. That is, in the electronic apparatus of claim 1,

the communication with respect to the cell unit and the switching of operation modes passes through the connection portion, which is directed connectable to the cell unit. No such features are disclosed or suggested in Yamamoto.

In Yamamoto, the electric product 40-n does not have a connecting portion to which the power generation apparatus 20 is directly connectable, and thus does not establish communication with the power generation apparatus 20 through a connecting portion. Instead, in Yamamoto, the power control apparatus 30 communicates with the power generation apparatus 20. Additionally, in Yamamoto, the power generation apparatus 20 is coupled to the power supply apparatus 100, which, in turn, is coupled to each of the electric products (40-1, 40-2, etc.). Therefore, Yamamoto is completely different from the electronic apparatus of claim 1, since claim 1 recites that the electronic apparatus itself directly communicates with and is directly connectable to the cell unit via the connection portion.

With respect to independent claim 4, it now recites the following:

4. A cell unit which supplies an electronic apparatus with electric power, the electronic apparatus having a plurality of operation modes having different power consumption amounts, comprising:
a fuel cell which produces electricity by chemical reaction;
a rechargeable secondary battery;
a reception unit configured to receive a message which indicates switching of the operation modes from the electronic apparatus; and
a response unit configured to send a first message to the electronic apparatus when a power consumption amount upon operating the electronic apparatus in the operation mode after switching is lower than an electric power that is supplied from the fuel cell, and to send a second message to the electronic apparatus when a power consumption amount upon operating the electronic apparatus in the operation mode after switching exceeds an electric power that is supplied from the fuel cell, but the power consumption amount is lower than an electric power that is supplied from both the fuel cell and the secondary battery.

Thus, claim 4 now recites that the cell unit includes a response unit that is configured to send first and second messages regarding the level of the power consumption in an operating mode. Further, the cell unit of claim 4 includes a response unit that is structured to notify the electronic apparatus when the power consumption amount is lower than an electric

power that is supplied from both the fuel cell and the secondary battery. Thus, the claimed cell unit enables the electric apparatus to perform proper operation control.

The cell unit of claim 4 now sends both “a first message to the electronic apparatus when a power consumption amount upon operating the electronic apparatus in the operation mode after switching is lower than an electric power that is supplied from the fuel cell,” and “a second message to the electronic apparatus when a power consumption amount upon operating the electronic apparatus in the operation mode after switching exceeds an electric power that is supplied from the fuel cell, but the power consumption amount is lower than an electric power that is supplied from both the fuel cell and the secondary battery.” However, Yamamoto fails to disclose or suggest these features, among others.

Instead, Yamamoto discloses that the fuel cell 20 merely outputs a matching signal C to the power control apparatus 300. Even if it was assumed, as suggested in the Office Action, that the power control apparatus 300 is a response unit for a “cell unit” and, thus, part of a “cell unit,” power purchase signal T is transmitted to the power supply apparatus 100, while the power request signal R_n is transmitted by the electric product to the power control apparatus 300. Thus, no messages are sent to the electronic apparatus. Further, nothing disclosed or suggested in Yamamoto includes the electric power available from the power supply source 80 and, thus, nothing disclosed or suggested in Yamamoto can send a second message regarding the combined electrical power that is supplied from both a fuel cell and a secondary battery, as claimed.

Since Yamamoto fails to disclose each limitation of claims 1 and 4, the claims are believed allowable and it is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

Since claims 2, 3 and 7-9 depend from and further limit either claim 1 or 4, they too are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1 or 4.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,714,874 to Bonnefoy. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Since claim 11 depends from and further limits claim 4, claim 11 is allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 4.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims are allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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